

Date: December 14, 2001

DSL-BQA-01-049

To: Nursing Homes

NH 27

From: Donna Cochems, Chief
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Via: Susan Schroeder, Director
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Cross Reference: BQA Memo 00-066
BQA Memo 01-022
BQA Memo 01-033

Single Task Worker Phase-Out Extension

In January 2001, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) approved the Department's one-year phase-out of single task workers in federally-certified nursing homes who have not successfully completed a nurse aide training and competency evaluation test or are a listed licensed health professional (see direct, nursing related services). Recently, CMS notified the Department that they are developing a notice of proposed rulemaking, which will address the use of paid feeding assistants by nursing homes. **Based on that, CMS has granted Wisconsin an extension of the phase-out deadline of January 23, 2002, until publication of the final rule.**

In the interim, nursing homes that have already obtained approval from BQA may continue to utilize single task workers (see BQA Memo 00-066). No new applications for single task workers will be accepted at this time, pending the publication of the final rule by CMS. Facilities utilizing single task workers are urged to encourage these valuable employees to become trained as nurse aides. However, a person who only transports clients (not to include transferring clients) is not required to be a nurse aide or licensed health professional (see BQA Memo 01-033). Volunteers are also exempt from these requirements.

Direct, Nursing Related Services

Previously, CMS informed the Department that direct, nursing related services provided by employees of federally certified nursing home must be performed by a nurse aide or other health care professional (defined at 42 CFR Part 483.75(e)(1) as "...a physician, physician assistant, nurse practitioner, physical, speech, or occupational therapist; physical or occupational therapy assistant; registered professional nurse; licensed practical nurse; or licensed or certified social worker").

The following list of nursing related services are included in a nurse aide training program curriculum and involve direct, hands-on care. Only a nurse aide or other health care professional may provide these services:

- **Basic nursing skills:** acceptable personal hygiene habits; use of proper body mechanics; observe and report changes in client's behavior, including recognizing abnormal signs and symptoms of behavior; basic principles of nutrition and hydration; appropriate techniques in walking, transferring (not transporting); positioning; applying soft restraints; proper isolation techniques; perform common accepted infection control practices, including proper gloving and disposal of blood and body fluids; make occupied beds; measure temperature, pulse and respiration; measure client's height and weight; record objective information (e.g., height and weight); apply nonprescription ointments; assist with care when death is imminent; post-mortem care.
- **Personal care skills:** giving a complete or partial bed bath and assisting clients in taking baths and showers; care of the perineal area; appropriate oral hygiene care, including care of dentures; providing nail, hair and skin care; shaving and shampooing techniques, dressing and undressing clients; preparing clients for meals; assist with feeding clients, including use of adaptive feeding utensils; assist with bladder and bowel elimination.

- **Basic restorative services:** proper positioning of clients with use of pillows, towel rolls, padding and footboards; perform simple range of motion exercises; transfer clients using Hoyer lifts, wheelchairs and gait belts; reinforce breathing exercises (coughing and deep breathing); help clients with glasses and hearing aids.
- **Dementias:** feeding and fluid intake problems associated with dementia and specialized techniques to address these problems; specialized techniques for addressing client behavioral problems such as wandering and confusion; diversional activities such as specially selected music and therapeutic ambulation needed when providing care to clients with dementia.

Information Contacts

Now Available – The Wisconsin Nurse Aide Training Program & Directory Manual at

www.dhfs.state.wi.us/caregiver/publications/NATDMan.htm provides detailed information about the nurse aide training and competency evaluation program regulations and the Nurse Aide Directory in Wisconsin.

Contact the following for information regarding:

Approved nurse aide training and competency evaluation programs in your area:	Wisconsin Nurse Aide Directory (608) 267-2374 E-mail: WI_Nurse_Aide_Directory@dhfs.state.wi.us
Questions about nurse aide training program requirements, curriculum, nursing-related services:	<u>Cindy Geist, Nurse Training Program Consultant</u> Caregiver Regulation Investigation Section (608) 267-0467
Questions about Wisconsin's single task worker phase-out plan:	<u>Donna Cochems, Chief</u> Caregiver Regulation and Investigation Section (608) 266-5153
Any other related questions:	<div> <u>Patricia Benesh, Regional Field Operations Director</u> Southeastern (Milwaukee) Regional Office (414) 227-4908 </div> <div> <u>Joe Bronner, Regional Field Operations Director</u> Western (Eau Claire) Regional Office (715) 836-4753 </div> <div> <u>Kevin Coughlin, Regional Field Operations Director</u> Northeastern (Green Bay) Regional Office (920) 448-5249 </div> <div> <u>Joanne Powell, Regional Field Operations Director</u> Northern (Rhineland) Regional Office (715) 365-2802 </div> <div> <u>Phyllis Tschumper, Regional Field Operations Director</u> Southern (Madison) Regional Office (608) 243-2374 </div>